

## Akan Golden Priestesses

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### Title: AKAN GOLDEN PRIESTESS

This framed art work is a digital illustration. It combines Eastern traditional (African) illustration techniques and Western contemporary (American) digital new media art and printing techniques. The artist portrays physical beings, emotional depths and spiritual energy. The occasion was a New Year Festival involving a deity in Ghana Asuo Gyebi. It was also a graduation ceremony for newly initiated priestesses. It took place at the Akonnedi Shrine of the Asona Abusua Clan at Larteh. Larteh is a village in the eastern region of Ghana, West Africa.

### Meet the Artist: [William Jones](#)



*I was interested in understanding and increasing my knowledge of traditional "religion" as practiced by the Akans of Ghana, West Africa. I attended and witnessed the completion of spiritual training of numerous priests and priestesses in the Akan tradition with a "Nana" (a term of respect accorded to elders and priests) living in America. I was allowed to accompany this group of Americans following the Akan tradition in the United States and the fellowship with the Akan priesthood in Ghana.*

*For the journey, I rode in a mini-van throughout the night, slept on floor mats, and enjoyed non-stop drumming and dancing for days, saw livestock offerings to the shrines, and heard prophecy through shrine priests and priestesses.*

*Larteh is a small farming town located about 40 miles northeast of Accra in the Eastern Region. The people of Larteh are Guan and settled in Larteh centuries ago. Although they speak Akuapim Twi, they also speak Larteh, a dialect of Guan. Most people in Larteh place emphasis on their cultural and historical heritage. They view their town as unique, and elders, in particular, want to maintain their individual language and culture. There are few individuals who are*

*from different ethnic groups, and there is very little, if any, migration to Larteh from other areas of Ghana.*

*Larteh is a farming community, [and] there are limited employment opportunities; most residents tend to be limited to farming activities, trading activities, or teaching. Many people also spend a portion of their lives outside of Larteh due to this employment situation. They will travel to Accra or other neighboring towns for employment.*

*The Nana Akonnedi Shrine of Kubease-Larteh, Ghana is for the deity, Asuo Gyebi, who is a healer and protector. At the shrine, they train and ordain priests, priestesses, herbalists and healers in the spiritual tradition of the Nana Akonnedi Shrine of Larteh, and work with other shrines and community organizations for the mutual exchange of knowledge.*

*Akan shrine priests and priestesses help individuals through healing work and services for the community. It is a spiritual/religious, cultural and educational society that is dedicated to the spiritual upliftment and the cultural, educational and economic development of the African family.*

*As practitioners of the traditional African healing arts, healers include not only Akan-trained priests/priestesses, but also healers trained within the Yoruba and rich wisdom systems of traditional Africa.*

*For one-on-one healing work, competencies include, among others: divination and deity-mediation, spiritual readings and counseling, African herbal remedies and baths, spiritual cleansings.*

*Services for the community include: conducting religious ceremonies according to traditional African rites at family and community festivals or events, such as weddings, puberty rites, naming ceremonies, funerals, house blessings, pouring libations.*

